

REMARKS

Claims 1 and 3-5 were pending and under consideration.

In the Office Action, Claims 1 and 3-5 were rejected.

In this Amendment, Claim 1 is amended and Claim 6 is added. No new matter has been introduced as a result of this amendment.

Accordingly, Claims 1, 3 - 6 are at issue.

I. 35 U.S.C. § 102 Anticipation Rejection of Claims

Claims 1- 2 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Miyachi et al. (Miyachi) (U.S. Patent No. 6,211,937). Although, Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections, Claim 1 has been amended to clarify the invention and remove any ambiguities that may have been the basis for these rejections.

Claim 1 is directed to a liquid crystal panel. The liquid crystal panel comprises a driving substrate, pixels, signal lines and scanning lines, an alignment film, a counter substrate, a liquid crystal layer, and at least one projection provided in each of the pixels.

Amended Claim 1 recites that “at least one projection provided in each of the pixels at a substantially central position, relative to two *first* opposite boundaries of the corresponding pixel, the two *first* opposite boundaries being parallel to the rubbing direction, the central position being adjacent to a starting position of the rubbing direction and *closer to one of two second boundaries* not being parallel to the rubbing direction *than to a center of the corresponding pixel.*”

Miyachi fails to disclose or suggest the claimed position of the at least one projection is provided at a central position relative to opposite and parallel boundaries, which is adjacent to a starting position of the rubbing direction and *closer to one of two second boundaries* not being parallel to the rubbing direction *than to a center of the corresponding pixel.*

Miyachi does disclose a plurality of positions of the columnar spacer 5 within the pixel region, as supported by FIGs 1 – 11. However, none of these positions is located at a central position relative to opposite and parallel boundaries while being adjacent to a starting position of

the rubbing direction and closer to one of two second boundaries not being parallel to the rubbing direction than to a center of the corresponding pixel.

Thus, Miyachi fails to anticipate Claim 1. As such, Claim 1 is allowable over Miyachi. The rejection of Claim 2 is now moot in view of its cancellation.

Applicants respectfully request that the claim rejections under 35 U.S.C 102(b) be withdrawn.

II. 35 U.S.C. § 103 Obviousness Rejection of Claim 3

Claim 3 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Miyachi in view of Miura et al. (Miura) (US Patent No. 5,877,836). Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections.

In regard to Claim 3 dependent upon Claim 1, Claim 1 has been shown above to be allowable over Miyachi. Moreover, Miura fails to teach or suggest the above discussed distinguishable limitation of Claim 1. Further, no combination of the cited references fairly teaches or suggests the subject matter of Claim 3. Thus, Claim 3 is patentable over the cited references, taken singly or in any combination with each other.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that these 103(a) rejections be withdrawn.

III. 35 U.S.C. § 103 Obviousness Rejection of Claim 4

Claim 4 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Miyachi in view of Sakamoto (US Patent No. 6,853,421). Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections.

In regard to Claim 4, Claim 1 has been shown above to be allowable over Miyachi. Moreover, Miura fails to teach or suggest the above discussed distinguishable limitation of Claim 1. Further, no combination of the cited references fairly teaches or suggests the subject matter of Claim 4. Thus, Claim 4 is patentable over the cited references, taken singly or in any combination with each other.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that these 103(a) rejections be withdrawn.

IV. 35 U.S.C. § 103 Obviousness Rejection of Claim 5

Claim 5 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Miyachi in view of Kaise et al. ("Kaise")(US Patent No. 6,788,372). Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections.

In regard to Claim 5, Claim 1 has been shown above to be allowable over Miyachi. Moreover, Kaise fails to teach or suggest the above discussed distinguishable limitation of Claim 1. Further, no combination of the cited references fairly teaches or suggests the subject matter of Claim 5. Thus, Claim 5 is patentable over the cited references, taken singly or in any combination with each other.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that these 103(a) rejections be withdrawn.

New Claim 6 is directly dependent on Claim 4 and indirectly on Claim 1, and thus also patentable over the cited references, for at least the same reasons.

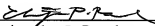
V. **Conclusion**

In view of the above amendments and remarks, Applicant submits that Claims 1 and 3 – 6 are clearly allowable over the cited prior art, and respectfully requests early and favorable notification to that effect.

If the Examiner finds that there are any outstanding issues which may be resolved by a telephone interview, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney at the below listed number.

Respectfully submitted,

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